

**ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE  
ANNIVERSARY MEETING  
OF THE GEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY OF LONDON**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649396733

Address Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the Geological Society of London by John Evans

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**JOHN EVANS**

**ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE  
ANNIVERSARY MEETING  
OF THE GEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY OF LONDON**



# ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING

OF THE

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,

*On the 18th of FEBRUARY, 1876;*

PREFACED BY

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE AWARD

OF

THE WOLLASTON MEDAL,

THE PROCEEDS OF THE DONATION-FUND,

THE MURCHISON MEDAL

AND GEOLOGICAL FUND,

AND

THE LYELL MEDAL AND FUND

FOR THE SAME YEAR.

By JOHN EVANS, Esq., F.R.S.,

PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY TAYLOR AND FRANCIS,

RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

1876.

**PROCEEDINGS**  
AT THE  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,**  
18th FEBRUARY, 1876.

---

**AWARD OF THE WOLLASTON MEDAL.**

The Reports of the Council and of the Library and Museum Committee having been read, the President, JOHN EVANS, Esq., F.R.S., presented the Wollaston Gold Medal to Professor HUXLEY, F.R.S., F.G.S., addressing him as follows:—

Professor HUXLEY,—

It is a source of great satisfaction to me that it should fall to my lot to place in your hands the Wollaston Medal, which has been awarded to you by the Council of this Society in recognition of your distinguished services to geological science.

Those services have been so great and are so universally acknowledged that it seems hardly necessary to dilate upon them. For a period of upwards of five-and-twenty years you have been engaged in biological researches, which have resulted in throwing a flood of light upon the structure, affinities, and development of organisms of every class, from those so simple as to occupy the border territory between the animal and vegetable kingdoms, up to the highest forms of mammalian life.

Such researches cannot but have had a great and beneficial influence on geological thought. But your services to geology and to this Society are of a far higher and more direct character. Not only have you furnished to our 'Proceedings' numerous and valuable palaeontological essays, but on three occasions, either as President or as representing the President of this Society, you have delivered Anniversary Addresses which are models of the philosophical exposition of great geological principles, such as I sincerely wish it had been in my power this afternoon to imitate.

In addition to these services to the Society, you have, it may

safely be affirmed, done more by your lectures than almost any other man to advance palaeontological studies among those who are undergoing a course of scientific training, while to more popular audiences you have, by your vivid and lucid descriptions, rendered intelligible those marvellous natural processes by which such beds as our Limestones, Coal, and Chalk have gradually been built up.

As formerly one of your Secretaries, I know the deep interest you take in all geological pursuits; and I therefore venture to express a hope, in which all in this room will share, that the day may not long be distant when, with renewed health and strength, and a greater amount of leisure at your command, you may again be able to take a frequent part in the meetings of this Society, of whose appreciation of your labours this medal is the symbol.

Professor HUXLEY, in reply, said:—

Mr. PRESIDENT,—

I am so much more accustomed to the language of criticism than to that of panegyric, that I feel a certain difficulty in framing a reply appropriate to the address with which you have just honoured me.

To be enrolled among the eminent men who have been recipients of the Wollaston Medal is a distinction of which the most ambitious aspirant to scientific honours may be proud. The terms of personal kindness in which you have clothed the award of the Council, and the warmth of my reception by the meeting, lead me to hope that I may, in addition, regard the distinction which has been conferred upon me as a mark of the goodwill of the colleagues with whom in past years I have been so closely associated.

It is my hope and expectation, Mr. President, that the wish which you have so kindly expressed as to the resumption of my palaeontological work, will be fulfilled.

The great biological question of the day is the problem of evolution; but geologists, as Kant says, are the archaeologists of nature, and the sole direct and irrefragable evidence of the method whereby living things have become what they are, is to be sought among fossil remains. If I have in any degree merited the unexpected honour you have conferred upon me, it is because I have steadily kept this truth in view; and if I shall ever succeed in deserving the Wollaston Medal better than at present, it will be by further attempts to translate the archaeological facts of nature into history.

---

## AWARD OF THE WOLLASTON DONATION-FUND.

The PRESIDENT then presented the Balance of the proceeds of the Wollaston Donation-fund to Mr. J. GWYN JEFFREYS, for transmission to Professor GIUSEPPE SEGUENZA, of Messina, F.C.G.S., and addressed him in the following terms:—

Mr. GWYN JEFFREYS,—

In placing in your hands the Balance of the proceeds of the Wollaston Fund for transmission to our foreign correspondent, Professor Seguenza, of Messina, may I request you to convey to him at the same time our high sense of the value of his investigations upon the Tertiary beds of Italy and Sicily, on which he has already published such numerous and important memoirs.

Will you, in addition, express a hope that this mark of our appreciation may also prove of some assistance to him in the further prosecution of his researches.

Mr. GWYN JEFFREYS, in expressing the thanks of his friend Prof. Seguenza, said that this testimonial would not only be highly valued, but be especially acceptable, because the stipend of an Italian Professor was too small to enable him to prosecute his palaeontological researches as fully as he could desire.

## AWARD OF THE MURCHISON MEDAL AND GEOLOGICAL FUND.

The PRESIDENT next handed the Murchison Medal to Professor RAMSAY for transmission to Mr. A. R. C. SELWYN, F.R.S., F.G.S., and spoke as follows:—

Professor RAMSAY,—

I place in your hands the Murchison Medal and the portion of the Murchison Fund which have been awarded to Mr. Alfred R. C. Selwyn, F.R.S., in recognition of his services to Silurian geology; for no one can appreciate better than yourself the character and importance of his work, or can better convey to him the assurance of the high estimation in which it is held.

As one of the officers of the Geological Survey of this country, engaged in unravelling the intricate Lower Silurian Rocks of North Wales with their associated volcanic deposits—as afterwards in charge of the Geological Survey of Victoria, mapping its Silurian



strata, its gold-bearing rocks and auriferous gravels of different ages, and tracing the relations of the latter to the Miocene beds of the colony, and to the older rocks—as subsequently the successor of Sir William Logan in the direction of the Geological Survey in our North-American territories from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, the labours of Mr. Selwyn have extended over an enormous field.

How successfully he has worked in it, the numerous and excellent maps and sections executed under his superintendence, and his various reports and papers fully testify.

There is something peculiarly appropriate in the Medal founded by Sir Roderick Murchison being given to one whose labours, like his own, have lain so much among Silurian and other Palaeozoic rocks, among gold-fields, and in the direction of Geological Surveys. While it marks our appreciation of Mr. Selwyn's services to Geology, it will, I trust, not be the less welcome to him as a proof that though absent he is not forgotten by his fellow workers.

Professor RAMBAY, in reply, spoke as follows:—

Mr. PRESIDENT,—

On behalf of Mr. Selwyn, I return thanks for the honour that has been conferred on him. When Mr. Selwyn joined the Geological Survey of Great Britain many years ago, I may almost say that he received his first lessons in the art of Geological Surveying from me; but he very soon proved himself so proficient in the work, that a large part of the survey of the intricate Lower Silurian rocks of North Wales was executed by him in a masterly manner.

When the Geological Survey of the Colony of Victoria was established by the Colonial Government, Mr. Selwyn was selected to begin and conduct that work; and there also, with the help of Mr. Daintree, the Browns, and others, it was his lot again to be engaged on a great scale in unravelling the intricacies of Silurian geology. After that Survey was abolished, no one was considered so fit as he to succeed the late Sir Wm. Logan as Director of the Geological Survey of our North-American dominions; and there is therefore an appropriateness in the award of the Murchison Medal to one who has done so much excellent work among Silurian rocks in three regions of the world.

In presenting the Balance of the Murchison Geological Fund to Professor RAMBAY for transmission to Mr. JAMES CROLL, the PRESIDENT said:—

Professor RAMSAY,—

Will you convey to Mr. Croll the Balance of the proceeds of the Murchison Fund, and at the same time express the hope of the Council of this Society that it may prove of service to him in the prosecution of those studies with which his name has been so long and so honourably associated.

His researches on Ocean Currents, on Glacial Phenomena, on the bearing of the latter on Geological time, and of both upon Climate, were generally known and appreciated, even before the appearance last year of his work on Climate and Time, in which the results of his studies are so carefully and ably expounded.

The author of that book would be the last to regard the subjects of which it treats as being all now definitely settled, and requiring no further investigation; and it is in the hope that his inquiries into the phenomena of glaciation, and into the physical causes conducing to extreme modifications of climate may be still further prosecuted, as well as in recognition of the valuable past labours of Mr. Croll, that the Fund which I place in your charge has been awarded to him.

Professor RAMSAY, in reply, said :—

Mr. PRESIDENT,—

In returning thanks on behalf of Mr. Croll, I have no need to enlarge on the merits of a man so well known to geologists by his numerous memoirs, and now especially by his remarkable work, 'Climate and Time;' and though on a range of subjects so wide it is not to be expected that there should be no opponents to some of his views, there can yet be no doubt that the ability which he has displayed commands the universal respect of men of science and the adherence of not a few.

---

#### AWARD OF THE LYELL MEDAL AND FUND.

The PRESIDENT then handed to Professor MORRIS, F.G.S., the first Lyell Medal and the entire Proceeds of the Fund, and addressed him in the following terms :—

Professor MORRIS,—

This is, as you know, the first occasion on which the Award of the Medal and the Proceeds of the Fund so liberally bequeathed to the Society by our illustrious Fellow, Sir Charles Lyell, has been under

the consideration of the Council. It has, I may venture to say, been unanimously felt that it was impossible to find a more worthy recipient than yourself, and that, in awarding both the Medal and the available proceeds of the Fund to one whose name was so intimately connected with the progress of Geological science, we were best carrying out the intentions of the founder, and attaching an importance to the Medal which would show that, though founded later, it takes equal rank with the other medals at the disposal of the Council.

You have been a Fellow of this Society for upwards of thirty years; but the published results of your geological investigations extend over a period of more than forty. Your 'Catalogue of British Fossils' has long taken rank as a standard work, while your communications to this and other Societies, both on Geological and Palaeontological subjects, have been of high value and importance. Your lectures have done much to spread a taste for Geology, and to enlarge the number of its students; and those who have heard you take part in our discussions must have been astonished alike at the minuteness of your knowledge of every branch of Geology and Palaeontology, and at the powers of memory by which you were enabled to apply it.

I have much pleasure in handing the Lyell Medal to one who, like its founder, has rendered such long and meritorious services to our science, and am glad that, under the wise and liberal provisions of the bequest, this token of our appreciation is accompanied by a sum which may prove of assistance in enabling you to carry still further your valuable observations and researches.

Professor MORRIS replied as follows:—

Mr. PRESIDENT,—

In receiving at your hands the first award of the Medal founded by Sir Charles Lyell, I cannot but deeply feel the distinguished honour which the Council of the Geological Society have this day conferred upon me. It is unnecessary to advert at this meeting to the works of an author whose labours in the field he earnestly cultivated have so greatly enlarged the bounds of geological knowledge and influenced the tone of geological thought. I may say, Sir, that it was chiefly by reading the first edition of Sir Charles Lyell's 'Principles of Geology,' and his review in 1827 of Poulett Scrope, that I was led to perceive their philosophical bearings, and was stimulated to continue geological research; for although the 'Theory of the Earth' had been illustrated and supported by the eloquence of a Playfair, it was the